A Morphosyntactic Analysis of the Interlanguage of Kiswahili Speaking Learners of English

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Abstract: **This morphosyntactic study focused on analyzing the interlanguage of Kiswahili speaking learners of English at secondary school level. Guided by Corder's Error Analysis theory and Selinker's Theory of Interlanguage, the study analyzed the non-target-like syntactic sequences and morphological forms in the interlanguage of the learners in order to determine the strategies they use to navigate in English. The data was collected using a Grammatical Task covering a variety of grammatical concepts appropriate for the learners. Students' essays, written independent of this study, were also analyzed to corroborate the findings from the grammatical task. The population sample consisted of 173 form 1, 2 and 3 students from six secondary schools in Malindi Town of Kilifi County, Kenya. The data collected was qualitatively analyzed according to Error Analysis and the Theory of Interlanguage frameworks by Corder and Selinker respectively. The non-target-like syntactic sequences and morphological forms in the sentences of the learners revealed deviations in word order, negation, interrogatives, tense and aspect, auxiliaries, clause linkages, word derivations, singularization, pluralization, and prepositional phrases. The non-target-like syntactic sequences and morphological forms came about as a result of strategies such as communication, overgeneralization, transfer of training and language transfer which learners employed to navigate in the English language. The findings of this study contribute to the field of knowledge with regards to Second Language Acquisition.**

Key words: **Interlanguage, Second Language Acquisition, Learner Strategies**

I. INTRODUCTION

Curriculum developers insist, and rightly so, that in the teaching of English, the main emphasis should be on the acquisition of grammatical and communicative competence as becoming proficient in the language is a desirable life-long goal (KIE 7). English was introduced in Kenya by the British who colonized the country from the 1890s to 1963 when the country gained independence. The language has, however, remained very important to the Kenyans even after independence. It is used in parliament, in the judiciary, to conduct government business, and most importantly as a medium of instruction in institutions of learning. Like Jegede observes, the medium of instruction or the language in which education is conducted has far reaching consequences in all educational systems. It is the language in which basic skills and knowledge are imparted into the population and the production and reproduction of knowledge is done. Such a

language is therefore key as it may enhance or impede the quality of education.

Despite the importance of English in Kenya, the overall performance in English in national examinations remains unsatisfactory. Table 1 shows the combined overall means in the subject for the years 2014-2018:

Table 1: Performance of Students in English Nationally

Year	Combined Overall Mean
2014	77.68
2015	80.58
2016	68.06
2017	73.55
2018	72.78

Source: Kenya National Examinations Council Report 2019

According to the Kenya National Examinations Council Report (2019) the above means indicate an erratic performance that falls short of the ideal mean of 100 (50%). The report also states that the dismal performance in grammar could be an indicator of the low proficiency levels in the language. It reveals that the candidates performed poorly on the grammar test. The major weaknesses noted in grammar included poor punctuation, gross errors in spelling, sentence construction and subject-verb agreement.

Performance of students in English in Malindi Sub-county is similarly dismal. With the over 2,500 candidates registered for Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) every year, the sub-county has registered a mean of below C- for the past four years. Table 2 shows a summary of the means for the years 2015-2018:

Table 2: Performance of Students in English in Malindi Sub-county

Year	Number of Students Registered	Mean Score
2015	2573	4.6637 (C-)
2016	2707	2.7029 (D)
2017	2897	2.9715 (D)
2018	3097	3.4583 (D)

Source: Malindi Sub-County Education Office

This poor performance has been of great concern to researchers. Kisaka identified factors such as frequent usage of Kiswahili or other native languages and the declaration that English is a foreign language as major hindrances to the mastery of the English language in primary and secondary

schools in Kilifi County (42). Other studies have outlined how learners' oral and written proficiency can be affected by their communicative patterns (Oduor 78 and Akumu 96) and how the learner's first language can lead to syntactical, phonological and orthographical errors in their interlanguage (Mwaniki; Atwetwe 90; Mocho 163; Awuor 49; Mahero). Studies conducted by Mwaniki and Mahero et al. reveal that learners employ different strategies to navigate in English. Mwaniki who studied the interlanguage of the Kikuyu learners of English found that there is a relationship between the distribution and the frequency of syntactic errors in the learners' interlanguage. Mahero et al. in their investigation of the connection between the interlanguage processes and the learning processes revealed in the errors contained in the written work of the learners identified interlanguage processes such as transfer of language, strategies of second language communication, overgeneralization and strategies of learning as the ways through which learners navigate in English. Mwaniki also identified language transfer as the strategy most frequently used by learners.

Research has also revealed that there is a reciprocal relationship between oral and written language. Young children use the oral language skills they have acquired to learn how to read and write. Consequently, written language requires a learner to have a solid foundation in oral language skills. A weakness in written language therefore reveals a foundational deficiency in oral language. Parisse records that oral and written languages develop together but are governed by different types of knowledge and principles. Oral language is mostly an unconscious process while written language is conscious.

Though these studies reveal a lot about how the learner's first language interacts with a second language they are learning, research in SLA has shown that learners from different linguistic backgrounds experience a second language in different ways. It is line with this that we analysed the learners' non-target-like syntactic sequences and morphological forms in the interlanguage of Kiswahili speaking learners of English. Malindi town was also chosen because of its heterogeneous but predominantly Kiswahili speaking linguistic environment.

Theoretical Framework

This study was based on Corder's Error Analysis and the Theory of Interlanguage as proposed by Selinker. Using Corder's Error Analysis theory, the study analysed the NTL syntactic and morphological forms in the writing of the learners. Londorio Vasquez outlines five steps proposed by Corder in error analysis; collection of a sample of learner language, identification and description of errors, explanation and finally evaluation of errors. In the identification stage, the errors are described based on omission, selection, addition and disordering of some elements. Error Analysis Theory does not outline the strategies that the learners use to learn grammatical structures. Thus Selinker's Theory of Interlanguage which proposes the existence of a dormant psychological framework

in the human brain usually activated when one attempts to learn a second language was used. Selinker suggests that five principal processes operate in IL. These are:

1. Language transfer
2. Overgeneralization of target language rules
3. Transfer of training (i.e. rule enters the learner's system as a result of instruction)
4. Strategies of L2 learning (i.e. an identifiable approach by the learner to the material learned)
5. Strategies of L2 communication with the native speakers

Tavakoli observes that the five processes together constitute the ways in which the learner tries to internalize the L2 system. They are the means by which the learner tries to reduce the learning burden to manageable proportions. He points out that IL is central to the study of SLA as there is need to understand the learner's system in its own right. Through this theory, the study was able to deduce psycholinguistic explanations of the processes and strategies in the formation of NTL syntactic sequences and morphological forms in the learners' IL.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in six secondary schools in Malindi Town. The location was chosen for several reasons:

1. It is an urban centre that is largely cosmopolitan.
2. Majority of its inhabitants speak Kiswahili as a first language or as a fluent second language.
3. For the past six years (2012-2018) Malindi Town has continuously registered poor results in English at KCSE level.

The population comprised students in forms one, two and three. This age group was chosen because, like Gibbons and Ramirez point out, it is in the teens that higher levels of language proficiency are acquired. A total of 173 students participated in the study. This study employed a descriptive research design and a simultaneous cross-sectional approach which can be used to examine developmental issues. Simple random sampling was used to select the streams for study in each of the schools, and to select the students in each of the classes. The six secondary schools were chosen using purposive sampling. Two schools were chosen from the categories of high performing schools, two from low performing and two from average performing. Stratified sampling was also used to select schools from such categories found in the town as public and private, boarding and day schools.

The students of the selected schools were given a grammatical task which entailed rewriting a variety of sentences as instructed. The task consisted of ten English sentences containing syntactic and morphological forms appropriate for their level. The sentences selected were from Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KIE) approved English course books. The essays written by learners were also analyzed. The

non-target-like syntactic sequences and morphological forms were analyzed for deviations in word order, interrogatives, negation, tenses, auxiliary verbs, clause linkage, prepositional phrases, inflections for tense, aspect and number, singularization and pluralization. From these non-target-like forms, the strategies used by the learners were determined.

In the task, ten sentences covering different aspects of syntax such as word order, interrogatives, negation, tenses, auxiliaries, clause linkage and prepositional phrases were administered to the learners. Morphological forms from morphological processes of derivation and inflection were used. The participants were required to rewrite the sentences according to the given instructions without altering the meaning. They were given thirty minutes in which to complete the task without using resources such dictionaries or grammar books. The non-target-like sentences were analyzed for deviations in the seven syntactic categories identified in the study. The non-target-like syntactic sequences and morphological forms were counted and percentages worked out. These forms were explained according to Corder's Error Analysis theory. The distribution of NTL syntactic sequences and morphological forms was compared among different levels of learners and among the learners in the three categories of schools.

III. THE RESULTS

Using Error Analysis by Corder, the study described the non-target-like syntactic sequences and morphological forms in the interlanguage of the learners. The NTL syntactic sequences were analyzed for deviations in the seven syntactic categories of word order, negation, interrogatives, auxiliaries, tenses, clause linkage and prepositional phrases. The NTL morphological forms from morphological processes of derivation and inflection were analysed. These morphological forms were in the areas of word derivations, singularization and pluralization and inflections.

The NTL syntactic sequences and morphological forms were analyzed based on Corder's classification of errors, that is, omission, selection, addition and disordering of elements.

Omission

Omission of some elements was observed in syntactic categories such as auxiliary verbs, tenses, clause linkage and prepositional phrases. Morphological forms such as past tense or aspect markers and singular or plural markers were also left out in the verbs and nouns respectively.

Auxiliary verbs posed a challenge to the learners. 317 NTL sequences out of the total 2,951 were formed from wrong use of auxiliary verbs. This comprised 10.74% of all the NTL sequences. In the grammatical task, the learners were required to construct sentences using auxiliary verbs through inversion or through changing of statements to questions. The NTL sequences selected from the grammatical task revealed that the learners omitted the auxiliary verbs from their constructions without considering the semantic implications

of such moves. In one of the sentences in the grammatical task, the learners were required to change the statement 'We all know him' to a question. The following sentences from learners illustrate how the auxiliary verbs were omitted:

1. All we know him?
2. We know him?

In other cases, the learners omitted the auxiliary verb in inverted sentences. In the sentence 'He did not mention her to me even once. Rewrite beginning: Not once…' learners came up with sentences such as the following:

3. Not once he mention her to me.
4. Not once he mentioned her to me.

The learners' omission of the auxiliary verbs led to univerted sentences. Auxiliary verbs are key in inversion and their omission leads to the formation of NTL sentences.

A total of 334 NTL syntactic sequences in the use of tenses were extracted from the learners' writings; grammatical task (54) and essays (280). NTL sequences in the use of tenses constituted 11.31% of all the NTL sequences in the study. In some cases, learners omitted the past tense marker in past tense verbs leading to lack of concord in the verb phrases. The following NTL sentences from the learners' essays illustrate this:

5. And **the day end.**
6. I thank God for the opportunity I **have get** to inform you that my elder sister **graduating** come next April.
7. After I came to Administration **he take** me to senior teacher and he gave me a locker and then **he show me**…
8. I **have just complete** my degree course.
9. **I lift** my brother trying to look what is on him…

NTL sentences in Clause Linkage were marked with omissions of necessary connectors in sentences. In some sentences in the grammatical task, only one part of the correlative conjunctions was written. For example, where the learners were required to rewrite the sentences **'I think newspapers should inform and educate at the same time** *(Begin: Not only…)*, **'He was so bright that he scored A's in all subjects** *(Begin: So…)* the learners came up with sentences such as the following:

10. Not only newspapers should educate and inform at the same time.
11. So he scored A's in all subjects due to his brightness.
12. Not only should newspapers educate and inform at the same time.

In the above examples, the learners leave out part of the correlative conjunction. In sentences 8 and 10, the learners use 'not only' without its counterpart 'but also'. In example 9, the learner uses 'so' without 'that'.

In other cases, the learners omitted the necessary prepositions or prepositional phrases in sentences. Though such cases were

not many, they still revealed that prepositions and prepositional phrases were a cause of errors for learners. Sentences such as the following were observed:

13. Surely, I went back home crying alone and also sympathized my friend. (Instead of '…I sympathized with my friend)
14. You have here my word I no you will come the ceremony. (Instead of '…come to the ceremony)

Selection

According to Corder selection can be done by choosing an incorrect element. In this study, selection was seen in the areas of tense where the learners changed from one tense to another; in the auxiliary verbs and in prepositional phrases where the learners used one preposition instead of another.

In the grammatical task where learners were required to rewrite sentences without altering the meaning, some learners changed the tense of the original sentence hence changing the meaning. For example, instead of '**Scarcely had the plane taken off when one of the passengers began to scream**' the following NTL sentences were observed:

15. Scarcely were the passengers when the plane just taken off.
16. Scarcely plain took off and the passengers begun screaming.
17. Scarcely the plane went off when the passengers began to scream.

In the NTL sentences 15-17, the learners do not use verbs in the original tense and aspect. They change from the perfective aspect in the past to the past tense. The NTL sequences obtained from the grammatical task revealed that the learners changed from one auxiliary verb to another without considering the semantic implications of such moves. Auxiliary verbs are used together with the main verbs to show tense and number in the case of primary auxiliary verbs and to express ability, possibility, permission, obligation and insistence in the case of modal auxiliaries like can, must should, would, shall, may, might, need and ought to. In the use of auxiliary verbs to form questions, examples of learners' NTL sentences are given below:

18. Does illiteracy impede development?
19. Could illiteracy impede development?
20. Do illiteracy impede development?

These sentences were in response to the instruction to change the statement '**Illiteracy can impede development**' to an interrogative. Sentences 18 and 19 may appear target-like but they are non-target-like in the context in which they were written. The learners use the auxiliary verbs 'could', 'does', instead of the modal 'can'. Other examples that illustrate this are:

21. Under no circumstances my father is going to allow us to attend night parties. (Learner uses 'going to' instead of 'would')

22. On no account strangers are not allowed into the compound without permission. (Learner uses 'are' instead of 'should')
23. On no account will strangers be allowed into the compound without the security officer's permission. (Learner uses 'will' instead of 'should')

As explained earlier, sentence 23 may appear target-like but it is non-target-like considering the context in which it was constructed.

In other cases, the learners used one preposition instead of another:

24. Before twinkle of an eye the area was surrounded by a crowd. ('before' instead of 'within')
25. The evening went in a snail's speed…(instead of …moved at snail's speed)
26. We were all scared and our lives were on their hands. (instead of …in their hands)

Addition

This occurs when the learners add unnecessary elements. In this study, errors of addition were observed in the syntactic categories of negation, interrogatives, and prepositional phrases. Some sentences in the grammatical task required the students to negate. Negation in English is characterized by the use of the adverb 'not' but some other negative adverbs such as 'hardly' 'rarely' 'scarcely' 'barely' and negative adverbial phrases like 'no sooner', 'under no circumstances' can perform the same function. In the study, 11.97% of all the NTL syntactic sequences and morphological forms in the grammatical task were from negation. In the essays, 6.98% of the NTL sequences were based on negation. In the grammatical task, the NTL sentences in negation were characterized by the use of double negation. The learners used the word 'not' together with other negative adverbs which led to NTL sentences as illustrated below:

27. Under no circumstances my father would **not** allow us to attend night parties.
28. On no account by the security officers strangers are **not** allowed into the compound.
29. Not once he did **not** mention her to me.

In the above examples, the learners used the adverb 'not' together with the negative adverbials 'under no circumstances', 'on no account', and 'not once' thereby making the sentences non-target-like. In the grammatical task, learners were required to change two sentences from statements to interrogatives. In the sentences '**Illiteracy can impede development**' and '**We all know him**' only 5.37% of the sentences constructed were NTL. 94.63% of the learners' constructions were target-like. Some of the learners came up with sentences such as:

30. How can illiteracy impede development?
31. Does illiteracy can impede development?

This was observed more in higher level learners than in lower level ones. Some learners used a preposition where one was not necessary. Examples of the NTL sentences from the grammatical task are given below:

32. On no account **of the security officer** permission strangers are not allowed into the compound.
33. Only the workers **of whom** their wages are not increased they will resume duty.
34. Could development impede **into illiteracy**?
35. Under no circumstances **of my father** would allow us to attend night parties.

In the essays, the following NTL sequences were observed:

36. We paid **for** the entry fee.
37. I recovered **to** my normal condition.
38. He stepped **at me** on my foot…
39. I was looking for other means **for me** to enter the house but all what I found in nowhere.

Misordering of Some Elements

This can be done by misplacing the item or putting it in the wrong place. A well-formed sentence must have words arranged in a certain order. Thomas asserts that certain words only appear in certain positions or in certain combinations. A learner may acquire many English words but if he does not know how to put them together to form a correct sentence then he cannot use English effectively. According to Thomas when a sentence is syntactically well-formed, it is said to be grammatical. But when it does not conform to the rules of syntax, it is said to be ungrammatical.

In this study, learners were given a grammatical task in which they were required to rewrite sentences beginning with certain words or changing the sentence type. The learners were not required to change the meaning of the original sentences. In some sentences, the learners were expected to invert in order to come up with syntactically well-formed sentences. Inversion entails interchanging the position of the verb (especially the auxiliary) with that of the subject. It occurs in contexts such as in the formation of interrogatives and in sentences where the negative adverbs come at the beginning.

In the grammatical task, 56.7% of the learners were unable to rewrite the sentences using the correct word order. Examples of the NTL sentences written by learners are given below:

40. Under no circumstances my father would not allow us to attend night parties.
41. On no account strangers are not allowed into the compound.
42. Never again we shall fall for their lies.

In the essays, the following NTL sentences were recorded:

43. Not only the students were new to me but also the teachers and other workers.
44. Not only at school but also at home it has been one of my motivating factors.

Apart from misordering of words in inversion, some of the learners used personal pronouns with their antecedents in the same position in the sentence. Examples of these NTL sentences are given below:

45. **The senior teacher he** write down my name.
46. **All his wealth it** was taken by the government.
47. These days **most children they** have spoil their mind looking bad movies…
48. We have missed you so much **those all years** you have left us and went to Brazil.

In other NTL sentences, prepositional phrases were misplaced or omitted thereby creating the wrong order of words:

49. The senior teacher carried **for my locker** up to the class form one.
50. Hope this letter reach you in good time and help looking **forward for you reply** thanks in advance.

From the discussion above, it emerges that prepositions and prepositional phrases were a source of NTL sentences for learners in all levels of learning. In the GT, out of the 1098 NTL syntactic sequences obtained from the learners' sentences, 918 were due to incorrect word order (WO). However, this was not the case in their essays. In the essays, the learners experienced more difficulties in using prepositions and prepositional phrases than they did in putting words in the correct order. The NTL sequences in prepositions and prepositional phrases from the GT were 28 (1.73%) as compared to 588 (19.92%) in the essays.

The NTL sequences written by learners in form one, two and three were analyzed and compared in order to determine which learners had the most difficulty in which syntactic categories. In all the syntactic categories except tenses, the form one learners had the highest number of NTL sentences at 623 (38.48%), form two learners followed closely with 542 (33.47%) and the form three learners had 454 (28.04%). Learners in the three levels had difficulties constructing sentences with the correct word order as earlier observed. In the GT, NTL sentences written by form one learners in the WO syntactic category constituted 41.67%. The form two learners contributed 36.11% and form three learners 22.22%. These results were then summarized and then tabulated as shown in figure 1 and table3.

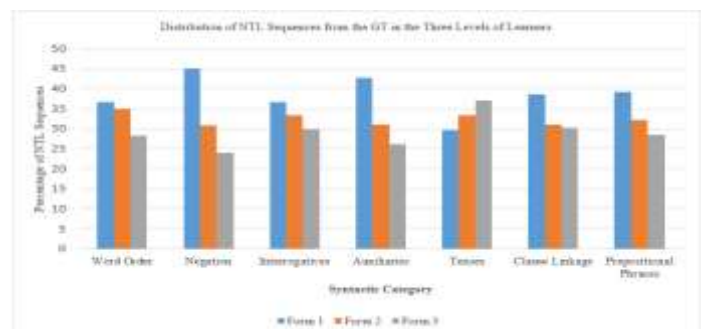Figure 1: Distribution of NTL Sequences from the GT in the Three Levels of Learners

Table 3: Distribution of NTL Sequences in the Seven Syntactic Categories from the Essays in the Different Levels of Learners

Syntactic Category	Form One		Form Two		Form Three		Total	
	No. of NTL Seque.	%	No. of NTL Seque.	%	No. of NTL Seque.	%	No. of NTL Seque.	%
Word Order (WO)	75	41.67	65	36.11	40	22.22	180	13.51
Negation (N)	9	60	3	20	3	20	15	1.13
Interrogatives (IN)	2	28.57	2	28.57	3	42.85	7	0.53
Auxiliaries (AUX)	39	41.05	28	29.47	28	29.47	95	7.13
Tenses (TS)	69	24.64	90	32.14	121	43.21	280	21.02
Clause Linkage (CL)	64	32.82	82	42.05	49	25.12	195	14.63
Prepositional Phrases (PP)	283	50.53	179	31.96	98	17.5	560	42.04
Total	290		449		593		1332	100

An important observation in the NTL sequences taken from both the GT and the essays is that in the syntactic category of tenses, there was some backsliding as the learners in form one had the fewest NTL sequences while the learners in form three had the most NTL sequences in this category. As attested by Selinker backsliding, which involves learners getting wrong what they seem to have already learnt, occurs when learners are under some pressure or they have unconsciously started to apply a grammar rule. In the GT, form one learners contributed 29.62%, form two learners 33.33% and form three learners 37.03%. This is probably because verb system is given a lot of emphasis in class eight and form one. In form two and three, other concepts in grammar are given more emphasis making the learners to backslide. This difficulty learners experience with the tenses is explained by Housen who observes that the verb system, while being a very important area for the structure of any language, is more likely to pose major learning problems for learners of any age. According to him, these learning difficulties may be experienced in identifying the correct verb forms and mapping them onto their appropriate meanings and functions a task he says is made more complex by a lack of structural cognity and of isomorphy of form and meaning in the verb system. This shows that the more grammatical structures are introduced to the learners who have not fully acquired the ability to process them, the more these learners resort to strategies to communicate and the more NTL sequences they come up with. If this trend where learners keep backsliding persists, fossilization may occur, that is, the NTL forms may be cemented in the learners' IL. According to Selinker even after years of instruction in a SL, the NTL forms may still appear in the learners' IL. These fossilized forms, Selinker asserts, may appear in the learners' writing or speech performance when they are faced with difficult material or when they are anxious or extremely relaxed.

The NTL sequences in the seven syntactic sequences from the GT and the essays were analyzed in order to establish whether there was a significant difference between the NTL sentences written by learners in three categories of schools. The learners who participated in the study were sampled from low performing, average performing and high performing schools. In the GT, learners from low performing schools recorded the highest number of NTL sequences. Their NTL sequences constituted 43.48% of all the NTL sequences that were analyzed. Average performing schools contributed 29.40% and high performing schools 27.11%. In the essays, low performing schools had 38.56% and high performing schools 24.54%. It can be concluded that students in high performing schools came up with fewer NTL sequences than those in average and low performing schools. The results of the investigation are summarized as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: NTL Syntactic Sequences from the GT in the Different Categories of Schools
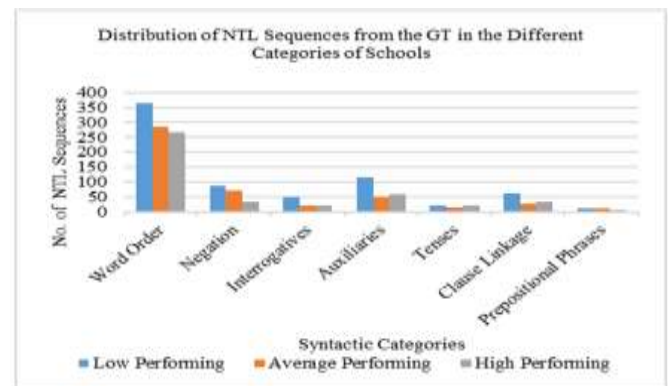
In the essays, prepositions and prepositional phrases proved to be the most challenging area for learners in all categories of schools. The total NTL sequences in the PP in all categories of schools was 560 (42.04%) as opposed to 180 (13.51%) in WO, 15 (1.12%) in Negation, 7 (0.52%) in Interrogatives, 95 (7.13%) in Auxiliaries, 280 (21.02%) in Tenses and 195 (14.63%) in Clause Linkage. In the essays, only 0.52% of the NTL sequences were from inversion. This was because the learners avoided using inversion in their own writing despite its importance in creating suspense in creative writing. This weakness spills over to examinations and leads to poor performance.

Though WO posed a major difficulty for learners in the three categories of schools, learners in average and low performing schools had more difficulty in this area than their counterparts in high performing schools. The NTL sequences in WO from low average and low performing schools were 125 out of the total 180 NTL sequences. This was 69.44% against 30.55% from high performing schools. In the GT, the NTL forms in WO from average and low performing schools were due to learners copying the sentences and presenting them as answers or rearranging words to form sentences with distorted meanings. In both cases the instructions were not followed as the meaning of the original sentence was either changed or distorted. According to the KNEC Report (2019), many candidates lost marks in essay writing because 'they were unable to use language creatively due to their limited linguistic abilities'. Though there are doubts as to whether or not aptitude is a major deciding factor in determining the level of success in language learning, in this study students with higher cognitive abilities came up with fewer NTL sequences compared to those of average or low academic ability. However, the results of this study are not conclusive. More studies need to be done in this area.

The processes suggested by Selinker in his theory of IL were used in this study to determine how the strategies used by learners that lead to the formation of NTL syntactic sequences and morphological forms. The strategies were analyzed according to the total number of NTL syntactic sequences and morphological forms in the GT and in the essays. The strategies used by learners in different levels of learning were also determined.

Table 4 displays the strategies used by learners in the formation of syntactically and morphologically NTL sentences. In the GT, a total of 1619 NTL sequences were culled out of the learners' sentences. Language Transfer (LT)

constituted 0.49%, Transfer of Training (TT) 12.47%, Overgeneralization of TL rules (OV) 13.77%, Communication Strategies (CS) 22.17% and Learning Strategies (LS) 23.4%. These strategies were used in 1171 NTL sequences. In the remaining 448, other strategies like repetition and use of long winding sentences were used. A summary of this analysis is detailed in Table 9 as follows.

Table 4: Distribution of Psycholinguistic Processes in the GT

Psycholinguistic Process	No. of NTL Sequences	% of Usage
Language Transfer (LT)	8	0.49
Learning Strategies (LS)	379	23.4
Overgeneralization (OV)	223	13.77
Transfer of Training (TT)	202	12.47
Communication Strategies (CS)	807	49.84
TOTAL	1619	100

The study also analyzed the NTL syntactic sequences and morphological forms in the essays written by learners to determine the strategies they used that led to the formation of these NTL sequences and forms. This was done to corroborate the findings from the GT which was administered. Just like in the GT, the five psycholinguistic processes were found in the essays of the learners. Though the learners used the same strategies in the GT and in their essays, the extent to which they used them varied greatly. Language Transfer was used more in the essays at 16.89% than in the GT at 0.49%. Transfer of Training in the GT was 12.47 but in the essays it was only 0.75%. The remaining strategies almost maintained the same levels of usage in the GT and the essays. This shows that learners use some strategies more than others in different contexts to meet their communicative needs in the SL. Table 10 displays a summary of these findings.

Table 5: Distribution of Psycholinguistic Processes in the Essays among the Different Levels of Learners

Psycholinguistic Process	Form One		Form Two		Form Three		Total	
	No. of NTL Seque.	%	No. of NTL Seque.	%	No. of NTL Seque.	%	No. of NTL Seque.	%
Language Transfer (LT)	130	25.89	55	14.66	40	8.79	225	16.89
Learning Strategies (LS)	106	21.12	89	23.73	100	21.97	295	22.14
Overgeneralization (OV)	71	14.14	59	15.73	29	6.37	159	11.93
Transfer of Training (TT)	4	0.79	3	0.8	3	0.65	10	0.75
Communication Strategies (CS)	191	38.04	169	45.06	283	62.19	643	48.27
Total	502		375		455		1,332	100

Language Transfer

Language transfer or interference is described as the process of a second language learner using their knowledge of L1 in the learning of the L2. (Ellis; Sirbu 374) Where the L1 structure is identical to the TL structure the transfer is positive

but becomes negative when it becomes a source of errors in the IL of the learner (Sirbu374; Mingorance). According to this definition, the learner can adjust the SL data to suit his communicative needs by adding, deleting or substituting forms to make TL forms more consistent with those of his native language. Flynn and Berkes state that although the first

language has been considered the main source of transfer in the acquisition of second and even third languages, it cannot be claimed that it remains the dominant source. Other languages other than the first language could be more dominant sources. Although for some of the participants Kiswahili was not their first language, it was considered the main language of transfer as earlier explained. The kind of transfer discussed in this research is negative which results into NTL syntactic sequences and morphological forms. The findings unveil that learners used this strategy to complete the GT and to write their essays. They used Language Transfer more in the essays than in the GT. In the GT, they used it 0.49% of the time while in the essays, Language Transfer featured 16.89% of the time. Since the learners in the study were predominantly Kiswahili speaking, the language considered for transfer was Kiswahili.

In the GT, learners came up with sentences such as:

1. Do we know him all?
2. Only when their wages are increased the workers will resume with their duty.

The order of words in NTL sentence 1 above is consistent with syntactic rules in Kiswahili which allow the modifier to come after the word it modifies. In NTL sentence 2, the learner directly translates from Kiswahili to English, especially in the last part of the sentence '**...the workers will resume with their duty**' which in Kiswahili would be translated '**…wataendelea na kazi yao**'. This proves what Odlin says that transfer is the influence that comes as a result of the similarities and differences between the language a person is learning and a language (s) the person has learnt preciously, even if imperfectly acquired. In this case, the learner taps on the similarities between Kiswahili and English but fails to notice the differences and ends up adding the preposition 'with' which is a translation of 'na' in Kiswahili.

The study also found that learners in form one used Language Transfer 57.77% in their writing while form twos and form threes used it 21.56% and 15.68% of the time respectively. This shows that learners in lower levels of learning a SL resort to Language Transfer more often than those in higher levels. This supports the findings of Mwaniki who observed that learners in class seven resorted to Language Transfer more often than those in class eight. The higher the learners advanced the more they shed off Language Transfer as a strategy of learning. In their essays where this strategy was prevalent, learners constructed NTL sentences as shown below:

3. You have here my word I now you will come the ceremony. (Learner omits 'to' which is consistent with Kiswahili Morphology. In Kiswahili, the morpheme denoting place 'ni' is affixed to the root of the noun to form an adverb of place e.g. karamuni)
4. Fujo's family had know about his secret **since when he got the money**(…tangu alipopata pesa)

5. The issue was rised and **taken forward to the county commissioner**. (Jambo hilo lilizungumziwa na kupelekwa mbele kwa mkuu wa kaunti)
6. The rumour was about **my younger brother who has joined with gangsters**. (…ndugu yangu mdogo ambaye amejiunga na majambazi)
7. He always come home late everyday while drunkard. (Alirudi nyumbani kila siku akiwa mlevi)
8. He started to **rise his temper on me.** (Alianza kunipandishia hasira)
9. Advise and caution the students about the effect of bullying and **remove a solution** to end bullying . (…kutoa suluhisho…)

The above NTL sentences show that learners rely on their knowledge of Kiswahili to navigate in English through direct translation. Sometimes this strategy helps them come up with target-like sequences but most times NTL sequences are formed.

Learning Strategies (LS)

These, according to Ellis, are the rules the SL learners construct from the data they encounter and gradually adapt and try to fit these rules to the TL system. Learners using this strategy will mainly resort to simplification of TL in order to communicate effectively. This simplification of TL involves reduction and modification of morphology and syntax as well as omission of function words, copular and plural markers to make the TL easier to use for the learner. In this study, learners were found to use learning strategies 23.1% of the time in their writing of grammatical tasks. In their essays, they used learning strategies 22.14% of the time. In both the GT and the essays the learners' NTL syntactic sequences and morphological forms were characterized by the omission of function words like articles, prepositions, copular verbs, plural markers and tense and aspect markers on verbs. The following NTL sentences constructed by the learners in the GT demonstrate this:

10. On no account **stranger** should not be allowed in the compound. (Learner omits plural marker 's' on the noun 'strangers' which was in the original sentence)
11. Not only newspapers should educate and inform at the same time. (Learner omits part of the correlative conjunction)
12. Not once he mention her to me. (Learner omits auxiliary verb 'had')
13. Not only newspaper educate but also inform. (Learner omits auxiliary verb 'should')

The NTL sentences reveal the learners' strategy of omitting the function words in order to express themselves. This strategy was used almost equally among the three levels of learners. Form one usage constituted 35.93%, form two 30.16% and form three 33.89%. This shows that learners of English regardless of their level of learning, resorted to this strategy to communicate in English. In the essays simplification comprised 22.14%. Learners used it almost in

equal proportion to the way they used it in the GT. Examples demonstrating this as given in NTL sentences 14-21:

14. The first day I came to school I was **new student**… (Learner omits article 'a' in the NP 'new student')
15. My second day in school I came late at school but **there no** teacher in class…(Learner omits the auxiliary verb 'was')
16. After I came to **administration office**… (Article 'the' omitted)
17. …he **take** me to senior teacher (Leaner omits singular marker 's' on the verb 'take')
18. My elder sister **graduating** come next April. (Learner omits auxiliary verb 'is')
19. Hope that this letter **reach** you in good time…(Learner omits present tense marker '-es' on the verb 'reach')
20. I have just **complete** my degree course. (Learner omits aspect marker '-d' on the verb 'complete')
21. I knocked **the door** but she didn't respond to me…(Learner omits preposition 'on' in the PP 'on the door')

Overgeneralization of TL Rules (OV)

Al-Khresheh defines overgeneralization as 'applying of a certain rule in the language learning process to several situations when different rules apply' (55). Ellis also explains that cases of Overgeneralization of TL rules can occur at phonetic, grammatical, lexical or discourse levels. Overgeneralization constituted 13.77% of all the NTL syntactic sequences and morphological forms. It was further observed that learners in lower levels of learning, that is form one and two, used this strategy in their writing more than learners in form three. Form ones used Overgeneralization 44.65% of the time, form twos 37.1% and form threes 18.23%. In the GT learners substituted one auxiliary for another thereby changing the meaning of the original sentences. Examples of these from the GT are given below:

22. Under no circumstances my father **will** allow us to attend night parties. (Learner uses 'will' instead of 'would')
23. On no account strangers **are not** allowed into the compound without the security officer's permission. (Learner uses 'are' instead of 'should' which was in the original sentence)
24. On no account **will** strangers be allowed into the compound. (Learner uses 'will' instead of 'should')
25. **Could** development impede illiteracy? (Learner uses 'could' instead of 'can' which was in the original sentence)

In the essays the learners overgeneralized in areas such as use of auxiliary verbs, formation of past tense by adding –d or –ed to irregular verbs, adding 's' to plural nouns, using the article 'a' with uncountable nouns and using **is** or **was** as plural markers.

26. …the other students **were** asked me my name…(uses **were** as tense marker)
27. I **was** miss you so much. (uses **was** to mark the past tense)
28. I make **a tea** before I wearing my nicely dress from Brazil. (uses **'a'** with 'tea')
29. She was **unpolite** person. (uses **'un'** as negative prefix in wrong context)
30. The issue was **rised** and taken forward to county commissioner. (forms past tense of **rise** by adding –d)
31. They just use an engine and starting to travel with it **fastly.** (Learner adds suffix –ly to **fast** to form NTL word 'fastly')
32. When I tried to stand up I was **beated** on my head with a hard stick and **felled** down helplessly. (adds –ed to **beat** and **fall**, which are irregular verbs)

Learners in lower forms overgeneralized in the use of –ed to form past tense, used **was** and **were** to mark the past tense, and formed NTL nouns by adding the suffix –er to some words. Overgeneralizations in areas of auxiliary verbs was more prevalent among learners in form three than those in form one and two.

Transfer of Training (TT)

According to Selinker in this strategy, the TL rule enters the learners through instructional procedures which the teacher adopts. This can also be brought about by the way the learning material is presented, the way the course book is structured and the context of language learning. These factors may lead learners to formulate hypotheses about TL which could lead to the formation of NTL syntactic sequences and morphological forms. Khansir also notes that some elements of the IL may be a result of a particular approach to the material being learnt (1027). In this study, Transfer of Training constituted 12.47% in the GT and 0.75% in the essays. In the GT, the learners most probably relied on the training they had received from their teachers, especially in negation. In form one, where emphasis in grammar is on different types of simple sentences (KIE 23), learners are taught affirmative and negative sentences. Most course books explain that the difference between affirmative and negative sentences is the presence of *not* between the auxiliary verb and the main verb. Other negative expressions like 'no', 'nor', 'never', 'nothing' are mentioned but more emphasis is placed on 'not'. (New Horizons in English Book 1:249; New Integrated English Book 1:153; Head Start English Book 1:217). The learners, therefore, note that in English the adverb 'not' is used to negate and apply this even in contexts where the use of 'not' to negate would create NTL sentences. For example, they used the common negator 'not' with negative adverbial phrases like **under no circumstances, on no account, not once etc.** Examples of these are given in the following NTL sentences:

33. Under no circumstances my father would still **not** allow us to attend night parties.

34. On no account strangers should **not** be allowed into the compound.
35. Not once he did **not** mention her to me.
36. Under no circumstances we would **not** be allowed to attend night parties.

In the essays, learners avoided using inverted sentences as earlier observed preferring instead to use the negator 'not'. In a few cases, learners used **never** to show negation. However, cases of Transfer of Training in the essays were very few.

Strategies of SL Communication (CS)

SL speakers often face difficulties in communicating in the TL. In order to communicate, the learners use strategies such as circumlocution, word coinage, direct translation or switching to their first language. Tarone presented five communicative strategies in SL learning. The strategies are paraphrase (under which there is approximation, word coinage and circumlocution), transfer, appeal for assistance, mime and avoidance. In this study, communication strategies of the learners are discussed under paraphrase (Approximation, word coinage and circumlocution) and repetition. Cases of transfer were also observed but there was no case of language switch. Communication strategies constituted 22.17% in the GT and 29.20%. Communication strategies had the highest frequency of usage as compared to the other strategies.

Paraphrase (Approximation, Word Coinage, Circumlocution)

Under paraphrase Tarone groups approximation, word coinage and circumlocution. In approximation, learners use a single target language vocabulary known to them which shares enough features with the desired item to satisfy the user (182-198). This strategy was used extensively by learners in different levels of learning and in all the three categories of schools. The following NTL sentences were selected from the learners' essays:

37. I took the bull by its horn and slowly tiptoed to my class when I was **furiously** called by the head teacher Mr. Kabaka. (By **furiously** the learner probably means **angrily**)
38. People were everywhere admiring the new things while others were busy **shopping** many kind of items. (**Shopping** instead of **buying**)
39. People who tried to escape were shot dead while others were beaten **vigorously.** (**Vigorously** instead of **mercilessly** or **brutally**)
40. One of my friends threw a stone and **knocked** a small house which was in between trees. (**Knocked** instead of **hit**)
41. **To my suspense** the dog started chasing me. (**To my suspense** for **to my surprise**)
42. Luckily Mr. Lukeman came and **ceased** his dog. (**Ceased** for **stopped**)
43. Our eyes were **untied.** (Learner probably means **uncovered**)
44. Everyone was **brutally** injured and luckily I was safe and sound healthy.

45. The **patients** were taken to hospital. (From the context, the learner should have written **The injured were taken to hospital.**)

In word coinage, the learner makes up a new word in order to communicate the desired concept. There were very few cases of word coinage in the GT and in the essays. In this strategy the learners added a prefix or a suffix to form a NTL word. In the GT, learners' NTL constructions were as follows:

46. Can **impetide** development illiteracy?

In the essays, the following NTL sentences were found:

47. I need to be first **fit up** in mind after that I apply the knowledge at pitch. (**Fit up** instead of **physically fit**)
48. I am a qualified worker has I can **apparate** the machine well. (**Apparate** for **operate**)
49. The pastor was **well-hearted**. (**Well-hearted** for **good hearted**)
50. Young girls are droping schools because of pregnancies that were caused by **drunkers.** (**Drunkers** for **drunkards**)
51. Resian is **respectious.** She respected his father when he called her and respond the information to him. (**Respectious** for **respectful**)

In circumlocution the learners describe the characteristics of the elements of the object instead of using the appropriate target language structure. One notable observation is that learners did not use circumlocution in the GT. This is probably because they did not feel the need to express themselves using different words from those already in the sentences. But in their own essays where they were required to write in continuous prose, many NTL sentences were extracted:

52. Some people were taken to an inside room while some of the terrorists were taking our phones and if we had some money. (**Terrorists were taking out phones and if we had some money** instead of **robbers were frisking us for cash, phones and other valuables**)
53. We were told to get out one by one as we held our hands on our heads. (**as we held our hands on our heads** instead of **with our hands on our heads**)
54. Soon thieves were all over the supermarket telling people to lay down pointing with their guns. (**Pointing with guns** instead of **at gun point**)
55. They grabbed us and forced us to enter into the car and closed our eyes with some pieces of clothes so that we could not see where we were being taken. (**and closed our eyes with some pieces of clothes so that we could not see where we were being taken** instead of **blindfolded us and drove us to an unknown destination**)
56. The doctor said that they had bleed too much they need somebody to donate blood for them. (instead of **The doctor said that they had bled too much and they needed a blood transfusion**)

57. A crowd of people had gathered watching over a man who tend to perform magic. (instead of **A crowd had gathered to watch a man perform magic tricks**)

58. Luckily inside my house there was an installation of CCTV cameras and they had to check and they saw someone like me who killed my own wife suddenly I had my mother saying that I am late for school I had woken up and saw the sun had already risen. (The learner should have simply written **Luckily for me, the CCTV cameras installed in my house revealed my wife's killer. As I pondered over this, my mother's voice woke me from this dream; it was already dawn.**)

59. It was during one day that I found myself at the middle of a big forest where it was covered with nothing but darkness all over. (The learner should have written **One day I strayed into the middle of a big dark forest.**)

60. The grabbed us and forced us to enter into the car and clossed our eye with some pieces of clothes so that we could not see where we were being taken. (The learner should have written **The kidnappers blindfolded us and drove us to some unknown destination.**)

61. When we eventually reached the bus station every pupil part ways to catch a bus to their home. (Learner should have written **On arrival at the bus station, each one of us went their own way.**)

62. This being the sixth year while finishing on my four year high school course, my plans are not just to sit and relax but make a step forward to practicing and playing B-ball to sharpen my skills. (Instead of **This being my final year in high school, I intend to intensify my practice in basketball in order to sharpen my skills in the game.**)

63. By playing basketball I can get a sponsorship to attend a college or university to play basketball. (Instead of **Through basketball, I can get a scholarship to study at university or college.**)

64. When I come to new school this time the first thing I go to the office of Administration and he write details and he tell me you welcome and then and prepared myself in everything and then same on Monday. (Instead of **On arrival at the new school, I was directed to the Administration Office where I registered as a new student. I was then advised to get all the requirements and report back on Monday.**)

Learners in form three used communication strategies to navigate in the SL more than those in the two lower forms. The form threes' usage of communication strategies constituted 56.29%, form twos 21.01% and form ones 22.62%. This reveals that the higher the learners advanced in their learning of English, the more they resorted to communication strategies to express themselves. This research analysed these strategies according to Tarone's (2000) taxonomy of communicative strategies. Since this was an analysis of the learners' written language, communicative strategies of message abandonment, avoidance and mime were not considered because they are more evident in spoken language than in written language.

Repetition

Bada observes that second language learners resort to communication strategies such as repetition in times of difficulty. This entails the repetition of syntactic or lexical items such as verbs, pronouns, determiners and prepositions (1082). In this research, learners repeated prepositions, adverbs, conjunctions and articles as the following NTL sentences reveal:

65. Under no circumstances my father would not allow us to attend night parties **under any circumstances.**
66. Under no circumstances father would allow us to attend night parties **under any circumstances.**
67. Not once he did not mention her to me **even once.**
68. Not once did he mention her to me **even once.**
69. Not once mention her to me **even once.**
70. Only the workers will **only** resume duty when their wages are increased.
71. Only workers will **only** resume duty when their wages increased.
72. Never again we shall **never** fall for their lies.

In the NTL sentences, the learners repeat the highlighted words or phrases. In their essays, the same strategy was used:

73. The men **were** captured and **were** taken away by the police.
74. Finally we had some siren **but** we did not know how the police were informed **but** that was not the problem **but** we all thanked God for that.
75. I knocked the door **but** she didn't respond to me I shouted again to her **but** all I knewed from her she was asleep because it was very late at night.
76. My wife was lying in the sofacates full of blood I had to call the police **and** other family members **and** they had to gather there.
77. Luckily inside my house there was an installation of CCTV cameras **and** they had to check **and** they saw someone like me who killed my own wife suddenly I had my mother saying that I am late for school I had woken up **and** saw the sun had already risen.
78. **A** broken hand **with a** lost dad **with** not even **a** goodbye.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study concluded that learners' NTL syntactic sequences and morphological forms were in the categories of Word Order, Clause Linkage, Prepositional Phrases, Tenses, Interrogatives, Auxiliaries and Negation. In the GT, the NTL syntactic sequences had a high number of deviations in Word Order, Auxiliaries and Negation. Deviations were lower in the syntactic categories of Clause Linkage, Tenses and

Prepositional Phrases. In the essays, Prepositional Phrases had the highest number of NTL forms followed by Tenses, Clause Linkage and Word Order. In the NTL morphological forms, the highest number of deviations were observed in Inflections for tense, aspect and number and Singularization and Pluralization. Deviations in Word Derivations were fewer. The study also confirmed that learners use strategies of Language Transfer, Learning Strategies, Overgeneralization, Transfer of Training and Communicative strategies such as circumlocution, approximation and word coinage. These learners use strategies of communication in their learning of English more than the other strategies. These findings are different from those of Mwaniki who found that Kikuyu Learners of English as a SL used language transfer most of the times in their speech and in their writing. In this study, the learners used communication strategies more than all the other strategies available to them. Though these strategies were ways through which the learners approached the task of learning English as a SL, they sometimes led to the formation of NTL syntactic and morphological forms. These strategies were used by learners in all categories of schools.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Since the study analyzed the NTL construction of the learners as they relate to Kiswahili as a first language, more studies should be conducted with other L1s in Malindi Town such as Pokomo, Kigiriama, Arabic, and Somali. This will add to the knowledge about how these languages interact with English in the course of SLA.
2. SLA researchers such as Selinker argue that spoken forms in informal settings reveal the real state of the IL of SLA learners better than written elicitation tasks which may be manipulated. This study considered only the written language of the learners. More studies need to be done using the spoken forms of language in areas such as phonology and semantics.
3. A longitudinal morphosyntactic study of the IL of the actual speakers of Kiswahili as an L1 should be done. This will enrich the research in SLA in the region.

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